

AUGUST 4.

Mr. CHARLES MORRIS in the chair.

Nineteen persons present.

*Note on Quercus prinoides* Willd.—Mr. MEEHAN exhibited a series of fruiting specimens of branches of *Quercus prinoides*. In some, the leaves were almost orbicular and obtuse; in others narrowly lanceolate or saliciform and acute; others had lobed and wavy edges, while others were quite entire. The plants were all growing within a few feet of each other, and the parent plants were also all under the same conditions of environment, and were at no distant date from one parentage.

They were exhibited for two purposes—first, to show that environment, as commonly understood, was not a main factor in the origination of variation; and secondly, to show that variation was independent of mere conditions of growth or sexual peculiarities to which variation was sometimes referred. It was, indeed, true, that young plants often had leaves varying from those on the older plants, and plants or branches bearing flowers of one sex would have characters varying from those of another sex; but these specimens were all fertile, and with young acorns. There was no possible ground for any suggestion as to different conditions in any sense, and the variations could be only attributed to an innate and wholly unknown power to vary, which science had so far been unable to reach.

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AUGUST 11.

Mr. THOS. MEEHAN, Vice-President, in the chair.

Eighteen persons present.

*On the Fruit of Opuntia*.—Mr. THOMAS MEEHAN exhibited a series of specimens of an unknown species of *Opuntia* closely allied to *O. Brasiliensis*, showing a gradual change from the joint or frond to the fruit. In one case there was the thin orbicular frond; then a frond with a slight rounding and tapering at the base; then one somewhat resembling a fruit, but very much compressed, and with an abortive flower-bud leaving a scar at the apex; then another, but very much elongated and fluted, and with a perfect flower, though small; and, lastly, the frond reduced to an inch in length, pyriform, and with the perfect, large yellow flower. He remarked that it could not be called a novel point to make that the fruit of a cactus was simply a